

Titles: HS 1111A – Achieving Balances & Meaning

Health and Wellness: Exploring the Evidence on How to Achieve a Balanced, and Meaningful Life

Location of classes:

Lectures (2 hours):

Tutorials (1 hour): Students will be assigned a tutorial

Instructor: Dr. Anushka Ataullahjan

Contact information: anushka.ataullahjan@uwo.ca

Office Hours: By appointment please use appropriate link on OWL

Teaching Assistants and Tutorial Timings:

Course Materials posted on OWL

Course Description:

What allows some people to achieve their goals while others fall short? What skills, routines, and practices can lead to a fulfilling life? Drawing on a large body of scientific literature, the course will explore mind-body connections over the lifespan that will enhance students’ knowledge of how to foster resilience, navigate complex social and occupational challenges, and acquire valuable scholarly and life skills to achieve a sense of balance, wellness, and overall life success. The course will allow students to challenge misperceptions about what underlies wellbeing and success in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of what these terms mean and how they are applied in daily life. Through a set of interactive activities students will explore how to incorporate healthy routines and practices into their daily life. The course will also include some exciting guest lectures from other context experts from within the School of Health Studies and the broader Western community.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Students will build critical thinking skills to evaluate scientific literature
- Explore key mental health concepts such as fetal programming hypothesis, the role of stressors, and resilience
- Understand key strategies that they can use to build health habits to support their success and wellbeing, and apply this knowledge
- Participate in the co-creation of a learning experience that is vital and engaging

Evaluation:

Item	Description	Weight
Midterm Exam	Exam will be multiple choice and true/false	20%
Tool Kit	During the course, students will create their own toolkit of key strategies to support them. A weekly interactive assignment will be posted online. Students are expected to complete the activities for each week, but for 3 of the weeks students will be asked to write a 225-250 word reflection. Their reflection will capture their experience completing these activities and any questions or insights that emerged. Each reflection is worth 5% (2 assignments at 5% each for a total of 10%) Reflections will be graded for completeness (as activity may have multiple items) and quality. Quality	10%

	will be assessed for evidence of critical engagement with activity, and integration of course materials. Deadline: Before tutorial of relevant week via email to TA	
Personal Playlist	Students will create a personal p create a therapeutic playlist of ten songs that generate feelings related to health and wellness, broadly speaking. They will be asked to answer a series of questions based on the playlist.	10%
Social Media Post	Students will take one of the key concepts from a required reading and either create a social media post/infographic, or a 1-minute TikTok that explains that key concept	15%
Final Exam	Exam will be cumulative and multiple-choice and true/false format. To be scheduled by registrar	40%
Active Class Engagement	Students will receive 5% for attendance to tutorials (students are permitted to miss 2 tutorials the whole semester with no explanation)	5%

Please Note:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)

Modules	Week	Topic
	1	Introduction Pseudoscience and Self-Help: How can we tell the difference?
Mental Health	2	Genetics and Early Life Inputs: What is the role of early life stressors on long-term wellbeing? Eriksson, J. G. (2007). Epidemiology, genes and the environment: lessons learned from the Helsinki Birth Cohort Study. <i>Journal of internal medicine</i> , 261(5), 418-425. Nelson, C. A., Bhutta, Z. A., Harris, N. B., Danese, A., & Samara, M. (2020). Adversity in childhood is linked to mental and physical health throughout life. <i>British Medical Journal</i> , 371 m3048 doi:10.1136/bmj.m3048

		Office of the California Surgeon General., (2022) “Understanding ACEs with Dr. Nadine Burke Harris” <i>YouTube</i> uploaded by Office of California Surgeon General https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hh1idR1XkC4&t=363s
	3	Mental Health and Mindset: How do they impact our life outcomes? Dweck, C. S., & Yeager, D. S. (2019). Mindsets: A view from two eras. <i>Perspectives on Psychological science</i> , 14(3), 481-496. Wolcott, M. D. (2022). Damaged, discouraged and defeated? How mindset may offer hope for healing. <i>Medical Education</i> , 56(5), 477-479. Boullion, A., Withers, M. C., & Lippmann, M. (2021). Mindsets: investigating resilience. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i> , 174, 1-6. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.110669
	4	Neuroplasticity: How can we reprogram our brains? Kays, J. L., Hurley, R. A., & Taber, K. H. (2012). The dynamic brain: neuroplasticity and mental health. <i>The Journal of neuropsychiatry and clinical neurosciences</i> , 24(2), 118-124. CBC News: The National, (2015) “Dr. Norman Doidge The Power of Thought” <i>YouTube</i> uploaded by CBC News: The National 15 Feb 2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2e5aTlq3nYI
	5	Resilience: How do we bounce back when things don’t go as planned? Kirmayer, L. J., Dandeneau, S., Marshall, E., Phillips, M. K., & Williamson, K. J. (2011). Rethinking resilience from indigenous perspectives. <i>The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry</i> , 56(2), 84-91. Southwick, S. M., Bonanno, G. A., Masten, A. S., Panter-Brick, C., & Yehuda, R. (2014). Resilience definitions, theory, and challenges: interdisciplinary perspectives. <i>European Journal of Psychotraumatology</i> , 5, 1-14.
	6	Midterm
	7	Vulnerability and Courage: How do we navigate these forces? Holloway, K. (2019) How Stigmatizing Male Emotional Vulnerability Has Created a Crisis for Us All. <i>The Body is Not an Apology</i> .

		<p>https://thebodyisnotanapology.com/magazine/masculinity-is-killing-men-the-roots-of-men-and-trauma/</p> <p>Brown, B., (2011) “The power of vulnerability Brene Brown” YouTube uploaded by TED 3 Jan 2011 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzIF7o</p>
	8	Reading Week
Routines and Strategies	9	<p>Attention or Time Management: How do we spend our time and why does it matter?</p> <p>Strazdins, L., Welsh, J., Korda, R., Broom, D., & Paolucci, F. (2016). Not all hours are equal: could time be a social determinant of health?. <i>Sociology of Health & Illness</i>, 38(1), 21-42.</p> <p>Grant, A. (2019) Productivity Isn’t About Time Management. It’s About Attention Management. The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/28/smarter-living/productivity-isnt-about-time-management-its-about-attention-management.html</p>
	10	<p>Creativity, Passion, and Play: What is the role of joy and expression in health and wellbeing?</p> <p>Garrett, M. (2014). Beyond play therapy: Using the sandtray as an expressive arts intervention in counselling adult clients. <i>Asia Pacific Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy</i>, 5(1), 99-105.</p> <p>Metzl, E. S., & Morrell, M. A. (2008). The role of creativity in models of resilience: Theoretical exploration and practical applications. <i>Journal of Creativity in Mental Health</i>, 3(3), 303-318.</p>
	11	<p>Sleep: Why do we sleep? How can sleep improve our wellbeing?</p> <p>Krause, A., Simon, E., Mander, B. et al. (2017) The sleep-deprived human brain. <i>Nat Rev Neurosci</i> 18, 404–418 https://doi.org/10.1038/nrn.2017.55</p> <p>Walker, M., (2019) “Sleep is your superpower Matt Walker” YouTube uploaded by TED 3 June 2019 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MuIMqhT8DM</p>
	12	<p>Mindfulness: How can presence improve stress management?</p> <p>Seegerstrom, S. C., & O’Connor, D. B. (2012). Stress, health and illness: Four challenges for the future. <i>Psychology & health</i>, 27(2), 128-140.</p>

		<p>Creswell, J. D., & Lindsay, E. K. (2014). How does mindfulness training affect health? A mindfulness stress buffering account. <i>Current directions in psychological science</i>, 23(6), 401-407.</p> <p>Davidson, R.J., (2019) “How mindfulness changes the emotional life of our brains TEDxSanFrancisco” <i>YouTube</i> uploaded by TedXTalk 12 Dec 2019 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CBfCW67xT8</p>
Wrap up	13	<p>Is Happiness Enough? Living a purposeful and meaningful life</p> <p>Mlneo, L. (2017). Good genes are nice, but joy is better. <i>The Harvard Gazette</i> https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/04/over-nearly-80-years-harvard-study-has-been-showing-how-to-live-a-healthy-and-happy-life/</p> <p>Helliwell, J. F., Layard, R., & Sachs, J. D. (2023). The Happiness Agenda: The Next 10 Years. In <i>World Happiness Report 2023</i> (11th ed., Chapter 1). Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Pg 1-14</p>

Course Policies, Faculty of Health Sciences

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with [policy](#), the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual’s official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

Communication

Email Policy:

Please check the syllabus for any relevant information before sending your TA an email. If the requested information is in the syllabus, we will respond with a quick, pleasant response indicating this. If the request falls outside of the syllabus, we will respond accordingly and, on a case-by-case basis. In alignment with policies at Western University, I do not check my email on evenings or weekends, and the same is true of our TAs. Please include the course title in your email subject line.

The Course Instructor will hold weekly online office hours via Zoom. You are required to sign up at appropriate timeslots as needed. If a student books an office hour appointment and can no longer attend, they are expected to cancel their appointment online, in service of other students. Office hour appointments will be **available a week in advance and will close 12 hours prior**. Students will be provided with a Zoom link upon sign-up. Because this is a relatively large class, e-mail tends to be an efficient and effective mode of communication between the course Instructor/Teaching Assistants and the students. Your e-mailed comments and questions are most welcome and will be responded to

in as timely a fashion as possible (although unlikely after 5pm or on weekends), provided they are appropriate (note: you are expected to use your “UWO” e-mail address for this course).

E-mails, like any other form of communication with the course Instructor/Teaching Assistants, are appropriate when their content is respectful, when they are not anonymous, and when their sender does not ask for information delivered during a lecture to be repeated. If you have a question or do not understand a term or phrase, it is your responsibility to tell the Course Instructor/Teaching Assistants what you think the answer is, what you think would be an appropriate example, and/or what it is that you are having difficulty interpreting, as this is in service of your learning.

Inappropriate e-mails will either receive no response or will receive a response in which you are directed to review this component of the course outline and then invite you to e-mail again. Any inappropriate emails will be forwarded to the appropriate administrative office to be placed on-file.

Note-Taking for Lecture Slides:

The lectures slides do not represent all the information for which you are responsible. The slides contain comments and images to remind me of the key messages in that lecture. It is your responsibility to add in the additional comments that are made during lecture which extend beyond what is the content of each slide.

Covid -19 Contingency Plan for in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western’s Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Use of Electronic Devices

During Exams: Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.

During Lectures and Tutorials: Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. For those classes in which we use this technology, it is your responsibility to ensure that the device is activated and functional. You must speak with the course instructor immediately, if you have any concerns about whether or not your clicker is malfunctioning.

You must use only your own clicker. For all components of this course in which clicker records are used to compute a portion of the grade:

- The use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence;
- The possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offense

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, in the [Academic Calendar \(westerncalendar.uwo.ca\)](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca).

Plagiarism

Student work is expected to be original. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and could lead to a zero on the assignment in question, a zero in this course, or your expulsion from the university. You are plagiarizing if you insert a phrase, sentence or paragraph taken directly from another author without acknowledging that the work belongs to him/her. Similarly, you are plagiarizing if you paraphrase or summarize another author’s ideas without acknowledging that the ideas belong to someone else. All papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Re-submission of Previously Graded Material

Without the explicit written permission of the instructor, you may not submit any academic work for which credit has been obtained previously, or for which credit is being sought, in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.

Use of Statistical Pattern Recognition on Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Use of AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT)

Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism. Assignments and/or lab reports should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original written contributions.

Academic Considerations and Absences from Lectures and Assessments

Religious Accommodation

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request (in writing) any necessary academic considerations at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the academic counsellors in their Home Department. Additional information is provided in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Academic Accommodation

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. Students with ongoing accommodation needs within this course are also encouraged to contact [Accessible Education](#), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances that are medical or compassionate in nature. These extenuating circumstances may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. In all cases, students are advised to consult with the academic counsellors in their home units, at their earliest opportunity. Academic counsellors may refer students to [Accessible Education](#) for ongoing academic accommodations.

Most forms of academic consideration require documentation, and this documentation is to be submitted to academic counsellors within five (5) business days of their return to academic responsibilities. Any such documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's [Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy](#). Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic considerations shall be determined by academic counseling, in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic considerations may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or

Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic considerations shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”).

Whenever possible, students who require academic considerations should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Under no circumstances are students expected to submit rationales for (or documentation of) any absences, to course instructors. Students are, however, required to follow-up with course instructors, in a timely fashion, to identify the ways in which the academic consideration will be implemented.

Students seeking academic consideration:

- Are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work;
- Are encouraged to make appropriate decisions, based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (e.g., upset stomach) or upsets (e.g., argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence;
- **Must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence;
- **Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to academic advising office within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities**

Examination Conflicts

A student completing tests or examinations with flexible submission times (e.g., where one or more evaluation is a take-home assessment) cannot request alternative arrangements unless a conflict cannot be avoided by rescheduling writing the exam to a different time within the window specified by the instructor. This applies to direct conflicts as well as “heavy load” conflicts (e.g., three exams within a 23-hour period). The student should discuss any concerns about a potential conflict and/or request academic considerations with their academic counselling unit prior to the deadline to drop a course without academic penalty

In the case of online tests and examinations, use of a “Conflict Room,” wherein student can write two proctored exams concurrently, will be interpreted as arrangements for continuous proctoring.

Use of Laptops and Electronic Devices:

During Exams: Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.

During Lectures and Tutorials: Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular

class. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

Support Services:

There are various support services around campus, and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>
2. Student Health -- <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombudsperson Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

The undergraduate experience is rewarding and challenging socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Finding ways to balance scholarly life with our personal lives can be tough, but it's important to learn how to manage stress. Western provides several health and wellness-related services to students, which may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>. You can also check out the Campus Recreation Centre or the McIntosh Gallery (<http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>), for alternative spaces to reconnect with your bodies and restore your spirit. You may also want to access local resources that are closer to where you are living during the school year. Recalibrating ourselves emotionally begins with slowing down, reminding ourselves that we are ok, and taking a few deep, slow breaths. This remarkably effective strategy brings the body from stress mode into a more relaxed state.

If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [Mental Health Support - Health & Wellness - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/mentalhealth) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or Thames Valley Family Services (<https://www.familyserVICETHAMESVALLEY.COM/>), a trusted provider within the community. To help you learn more about mental health, Western has developed an interactive mental health learning module, found here: [Health & Wellness - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/healthandwellness). It's also advisable to have a wellness safety plan if you don't want to reach out to formal services. Having the numbers of a few trusted individuals is another strategy.

Grading Policy:

The university-wide descriptor of the meaning of letter grades, as approved by Senate:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable.
F	below 50	Fail

It is expected that the grades for this course will fall between 68-72. In the event that the course average falls outside this range, a constant may be added (or subtracted) from each student's grade, by the instructor, to bring the class average in line with school policy.

Mutual Expectations

You can expect me to prepare a course that will allow you to meet the learning outcomes outlined in the course outline. Throughout all course components, I will strive to promote a collegial atmosphere of mutual respect conducive to the exchange of ideas and learning. I require the same from you. Any and all disruptive behaviours which may impede the ability of you or other students to learn are unacceptable behaviours. If we all abide by this code of civility and mutual respect, we set the stage for a healthy and stimulating intellectual forum. As a student in your course, it is your responsibility to learn the materials. Ask appropriate questions, and take ownership of your own learning. If you are

having any trouble with the course please communicate with me. I welcome your comments, constructive criticisms, and questions.

Rounding of Grades (for example, bumping a 79 to 80%):

This is a practice some students request. **This practice will not occur here.** The edges of this course are clear and sharp. The mark attained is the mark you achieved and the mark assigned; there is no rounding to the next grade level, or ‘giving away’ of marks. Please don’t ask me to do this for you; the response will be “please review the course outline where this topic is covered”. In the same vein, you will not be permitted to do extra work, an extra assignment etc in order to improve any part of, or your final grade

Students should log into OWL on a regular basis (i.e., daily in case of announcements) using their UWO username and password for access to the course OWL site.

Common Concerns Guidelines

The table below summarizes a list of common student concerns and how they are to be resolved. If you have a concern that is not listed here, then please email your instructor.

Concern	How to Address the concern
Course administrative matters	Read through the course outline or email the TA if the question cannot be answered from information in the course outline.
Course content questions	Refer to the OWL Resources (notes, calendar, etc). Email the instructor.
Grade disputes and requests for appeals	A student requesting an appeal to a specific course with respect to a grade for an assignment or examination must first contact their instructor to discuss such matters. Visit the following website for guide on submitting an appeal: https://uwo.ca/fhs/policies/appeals.html